

in Indiana and across the country as we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month.

From September 15 through October 15, all Americans will take time to reflect upon and celebrate the many contributions that Americans of Hispanic and Latino descent have made to our Nation. Millions of Hispanic Americans have worked tirelessly to provide for their families, strengthen their communities, and enrich our national culture.

I also wish to recognize the approaching 196th anniversary of Mexican Independence. I am hopeful that, as we commemorate this important milestone, we can also celebrate the remarkable friendship between our two nations as neighbors and partners for peace and justice in the world.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT GERMAINE L. DEBRO

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise to express my sympathy over the loss of Nebraska Army National Guard Sergeant Germaine Debro of Omaha, NE. Sergeant Debro died when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle near Balad, Iraq on September 4. He was 33 years old.

The son of a retired U.S. Air Force technical sergeant, Sergeant Debro and his family moved frequently around the country. Sergeant Debro attended Omaha Benson High School for 1 year and then moved to Arkansas where he graduated from high school in 1991.

In October 1994, Sergeant Debro enlisted in the U.S. Army. Following his service in the Army, Sergeant Debro enlisted in the Nebraska Army National Guard in October 1997. He was assigned to Detachment 1, Troop B, 1-167th Cavalry Squadron based in Wahoo, NE. Sergeant Debro remained in Wahoo until being reassigned to the Fremont, Nebraska-based Troop B, 1-167th Cavalry Squadron in January 2001. While serving with the 1-167th Cavalry Squadron, Sergeant Debro was mobilized for several overseas deployment including service in Kuwait in 2001 and in Bosnia-Herzegovina from 2002-2003. Sergeant Debro will be remembered as a loyal soldier who had a strong sense of duty, honor and love of country. Thousands of brave Americans like Sergeant Debro are currently serving in Iraq.

Sergeant Debro is survived by his parents, Alvin and Priscilla Debro; and brothers, Alvin Jr., who served in the U.S. Army, and Maurice, all of Omaha. Our thoughts and prayers are with them at this difficult time. America is proud of Sergeant Debro's heroic service and mourns his loss.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring SGT Germaine L. Debro.

#### DARFUR

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, we are at a crossroads in the 3-year-old

conflict raging in Sudan's Darfur region. Last week's Security Council Resolution 1706, authorizing a United Nations peacekeeping force for Darfur, represents the culmination of persistent advocacy for a robust international intervention and offers the resources and mandate necessary to bring an end to violence which has already taken more than 200,000 lives and forced an estimated 2.5 million Darfurians from their homes.

Unfortunately, the Government of Sudan has rejected the U.N.'s plan and is actively undermining peace efforts while exacerbating the humanitarian situation. The Sudanese Government's behavior increasingly violates both international law and the terms of the Peace Agreement it signed in May.

If the Sudanese Government remains on its current trajectory, disaster—perhaps on the scale of the 1994 Rwandan genocide—is imminent. The current 7,000-member African Union Mission in Sudan, which has been struggling valiantly to protect innocent civilians for 2 years, is set to withdraw at the end of this month. If it is not replaced by a U.N. force at that time or given an extended and expanded mandate, a power vacuum will result that many agree would lead to a resurgence in violence from all sides.

Already, the future of the peace process is at risk and increasing insecurity are leading humanitarian aid organizations to retreat from the areas where their services are needed most. More than a dozen aid workers have been murdered since the Darfur Peace Agreement was signed in May.

It is time for the United States and the international community to use all means of influence at their disposal to ensure that U.N. Resolution 1706 is implemented. In contrast to the small African Union contingent, which is severely limited in both what it is able and allowed to do, the recently-authorized United Nations force would include up to 22,500 U.N. troops and police officers and an immediate injection of air, engineering, and communication support for the African Union force. The resolution, passed unanimously by the Security Council on August 31, also gives the U.N. peacekeepers power to take all necessary measures to protect humanitarian aid workers and civilian populations.

In an affront to international law and the international community, Sudan's envoys refused to attend last week's United Nations meetings and the Government has rejected the introduction of a U.N. peacekeeping force, likening it to "western colonization." Most recently, the Government has issued an ultimatum to the African Union, demanding that it refrain from incorporating U.N. reinforcements or withdraw its peacekeepers from the country. The Sudanese Government insists that it will defeat rebel groups in Darfur on its own and has announced intentions to move more than 10,000 troops to the region. In effect, this

amounts to sending the same soldiers who displaced Darfur's refugees to protect them.

Over the past week, there has been a military buildup in Darfur, with witnesses reporting an influx of Sudanese military equipment and troops, which is in direct violation of May's Darfur Peace Agreement. In fact, while the Security Council was debating how to end the violence in Darfur, the Sudanese military was indiscriminately bombing rebel-held villages. Firsthand sources report flight crews rolling bombs off plane ramps, a tactic often practiced by Government forces in their 21-year civil war to devastate whole areas of southern Sudan, with nightmarish consequences for civilians.

Meanwhile, the situation on the ground is deteriorating rapidly. The more than 2 million refugees in Darfur and neighboring Chad—two thirds of them children—are particularly susceptible to malaria, diarrhea, and other health problems and live in fear of forced recruitment by rebel fighters or bomb attacks by the military. This current escalation in instability seriously impedes the mobility of humanitarian organizations, preventing them from reaching civilians in Sudan's most dangerous areas. The World Food Program reports that its existing food rations—upon which some 6 million Sudanese rely—will run out in January, adding another dimension of desperation.

In unanimously passing Resolution 1706, the international community has delivered a clear message to the Government in Khartoum that it needs to abide by international law and its own commitments. Last-minute changes the recent resolution included a reaffirmation of the sovereignty and "territorial integrity of Sudan" and the first paragraph of the resolution invites the Sudanese Government to consent to the deployment of a U.N. force, but such consent is not required by international law or the text of the resolution. Additionally, the U.N. Resolution threatens sanctions for any individual or group that violates human rights or the Darfur Peace Agreement.

At this critical juncture, the Government of Sudan must fulfill its obligation to relieve the suffering of its citizens by working with the United Nations to agree upon a robust, coordinated force to end the violence in Darfur. It is essential that the international community displays steadfast solidarity in insisting upon the implementation of United Nations Resolution 1706 and provides the troops and resources necessary to follow through on its commitment. The implications of allowing another genocide to take place in Africa could lead to a complete collapse in the U.N.'s authority and the deterioration of international law.

In conclusion, I am deeply troubled by recent developments regarding Sudan. The international community has asserted its determination to bring

an end to the violence in Darfur. Now we need to act upon these intentions and pressure the Government of Sudan to cooperate in efforts to improve prospects for peace throughout Sudan and the greater east Africa region.

#### FEDERAL FUNDING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, which passed the Senate last week.

This is an important bill that will bring badly needed transparency to Federal spending. The bill creates a user-friendly website to search all Government contracts, grants, earmarks, and loans, opening up Federal financial transactions to public scrutiny. By helping to lift the veil of secrecy in Washington, this website will help make us all better legislators. It will help make reporters better journalists. And it will help make all Americans more informed voters and more active citizens.

I am heartened to see that Government transparency can be a bipartisan issue. This bill has been cosponsored by more than 40 of our colleagues and has the support of more than 100 outside groups from all parts of the political spectrum. It has been endorsed by dozens of editorial boards across the country from the Wall Street Journal, to the Chicago Sun-Times and The Oklahoman. Most people I speak to in Illinois or here in Washington or anywhere else wonder why a public website of all Federal spending does not already exist. To them, this is just common sense.

Whether you believe the Government ought to spend more money or spend less, you should certainly be able to agree that the Government ought to spend every penny efficiently and transparently. Transparency is the first step to holding Government accountable for its actions and is a prerequisite to oversight and financial control. We can't reduce waste, fraud, and abuse without knowing how, where, and why Federal money is flowing out the door. This bill will provide that transparency, and not just to Members of Congress. Anybody with access to the Internet will be able to see how Federal funds are being spent. If Government spending can't withstand public scrutiny, then the money shouldn't be spent. The American people deserve no less.

I want to express my appreciation for the hard work that went into getting S. 2590 passed. I would like to thank the majority leader and minority leader, as well as the chairman and ranking member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, for their assistance in moving this important legislation forward.

I would also like to thank the organizations that helped create a grassroots

movement in support of Government transparency and in support of this bill. Without the hard work of OMB Watch, the Project on Government Oversight, and Citizens Against Government Waste, to name just a few supporters, this bill would not have been considered and passed so quickly.

And most importantly, I would like to thank my colleague, Senator COBURN, and his outstanding staff for their diligence and dedication. Since Senator COBURN and I first met during freshman orientation, we have developed a close personal bond that has translated into a close working relationship to bring more transparency and accountability into the way that Government spends taxpayer money. I have been impressed by the commitment and tenacity with which he stands up for his principles and beliefs, and it is these qualities that enabled this bill to get passed.

The House of Representatives is expected to vote on this bill later this week, and I am confident that our bipartisan and bicameral collaboration will quickly become law. It is not often that two Senators from different parties are able to bridge the partisan divide in this town and get something accomplished. But the American people demand greater transparency and accountability, and it is our honor and privilege—indeed, it is our duty—to provide the tools to help make that possible.

#### TRIBUTE TO SORIN DUCARU

Mr. BROWNBACK. I commend the Romanian Ambassador to the United States for his service as a diplomat, a civil leader, a transatlantic thinker, and a friend of the United States.

Sorin Ducaru has served as Romania's principal diplomatic spokesman for the last 5 years. He played a key role in the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the first head of the Division for NATO and Strategic Issues and was deeply involved in events leading to Romania's membership in NATO—ratified with the unanimous support of the U.S. Senate.

Once Romania joined NATO, Ambassador Ducaru was a part of the Romanian team that helped pave the way for the establishment of U.S. military facilities in Romania. The agreement was signed in 2005, ratified this past summer, and is currently in its implementation phase.

On this fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks in particular, it is important to recall our partners in the war on terrorism. In 2001, just days after 9/11 terrorist attacks, Ambassador Ducaru helped facilitate Romanian-American political dialogue that resulted in Romania's offer to put its military and logistical facilities, air corridors, and troops at the disposal of the United States in the war on terrorism. Even before Romania was a NATO member, it participated with troops and logistical support in the war on ter-

rorism. Now, Romania is the fifth largest contributor of troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Ambassador Ducaru has been a strong supporter of Romania's participation in the process of democratic and economic reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq, pointing to the lessons learned of his own country's dramatic and sometimes painful transformations in the last 16 years. He has been a constant advocate of cooperation between American businesses and the business potential of coalition countries.

His support for democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq is not surprising because Ambassador Ducaru is a long-time advocate of democratic values. He is a member of the new generation of leaders that transformed Romania to an open free society following the revolution of 1989. He has been at the forefront of a new generation of Central European leaders whose countries have evolved from nondemocratic and closed societies to countries that preserve freedom, security, and economic opportunity.

As he departs his current post to become the Romanian Ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, I express my gratitude for his efforts to build a strong and vibrant relationship between Romania and the United States. I look forward to working with him to continue efforts to expand political, diplomatic, economic, and military cooperation and stability through NATO. Ambassador Ducaru is a true friend of the United States, and I wish him well in his new capacity.

#### REDUCING FOREIGN ENERGY RELIANCE

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today to request that my remarks, delivered in the keynote address to the Richard G. Lugar-Purdue University Summit on Energy Security, at Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, on August 29, 2006, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

I am honored to address this assembly, which will explore an aggressive agenda to reduce our nation's dependence on foreign energy sources. I appreciate the opening words of my good friend, Governor Mitch Daniels. He and his administration have given priority to energy issues in Indiana. They are attempting to maximize the opportunities that our state has to become a leader in a broad gamut of energy technologies. I also want to thank our host, Purdue University, and President Martin Jischke for promoting this energy summit. President Jischke has provided brilliant direction to this university. His advice on energy, agriculture, education, and many other topics has been of great benefit to me personally. I will deeply miss his leadership at Purdue when he steps down as President next June, but I look forward to a very productive year immediately ahead and many mutual endeavors in years to come. I am also delighted that Congressman Pete Visclosky, will address the summit conference this noon. Pete has been a great partner on numerous issues,